

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2017**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on Thursday, June 22, 2017 at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere St., Richmond.

Remote location: 500 J. Clyde Morris Blvd., Newport News, VA (Delegate Chris Stolle)

Members Present

- Richard Anderson
- Max Beyer
- Paige Cherry
- Michael Dick
- James Icenhour
- Johnny Johnson
- Thad Jones
- Sandra Love
- Kathleen Murphy
- Bryce Reeves
- Christopher Stolle, by remote location
- Al Pianalto, 1st Vice Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation
- Marie Juliano, Vice Chair, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
- John L. Newby, II, Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Chris Chon
- Joana Garcia
- Susan Hippen
- William Haneke
- Nick Kesler
- Laurie Neff
- Belinda Pinckney
- Jennifer Wexton

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Carrie Ann Alford, DVS
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Karla Boughey, DVS
- Clay Mountcastle, DVS
- Leslie Frazier, Policy Director to the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs

Others Present

Don Kaiserman

Tommie McNeil, media (WVTF, WTOP)

Materials Distributed as part of the Agenda Packet

- Agenda
- Minutes from the March 16th meeting (Agenda Item IV)
- Reports (Agenda Item VI)
 - Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
 - Veterans Services Foundation
- Amended BVS By-Laws (Agenda Item IXa)
- Update from the Veterans Entrepreneurship work group (Agenda Item IXb)
- Update from the Women Veterans work group (Agenda Item IXc)
- Handout on the Strategic Plan (Agenda Item IXd)

Call to Order

Chairman Jim Icenhour opened the meeting at 10:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. He then welcomed the BVS members and explained that due to a lack of quorum and two members still en route the agenda would be adjusted and roll call delayed.

Welcome to the Virginia War Memorial

Dr. Clay Mountcastle, Executive Director for the Virginia War Memorial welcomed everyone and gave a brief overview of the expansion project. He thanked those members who had been at the groundbreaking ceremony the previous Friday.

He stated that this BVS meeting would be one of the last times there will be parking available until after the project is complete, as the construction fences go up soon and work will begin shortly after the 4th of July holiday. The Memorial will continue to be open and receive guests, however, parking will be a challenge. The 28,000 sq. ft. expansion project includes an expansion of Shrine of Memory to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Global War on Terror, and will be a mirror of the current Shrine of Memory, which honors those who lost their lives in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the first Persian Gulf War. Additionally, education and programmatic space will be expanded and they are building new parking.

Special Presentation

Mr. Icenhour thanked Dr. Mountcastle. He then called up Commissioner Newby and Deputy Commissioner Combs for a couple of special acknowledgements.

First, he called up Col. Don Kaiserman, former chair of the Board of Veterans Services. Commissioner Newby presented him with a special plaque in appreciation of his years of service as Chairman of BVS. Mr. Combs reminded everyone of Mr. Kaiserman's years of service on both the JLC and BVS and how he is currently serving as an alternate to the JLC. Mr. Kaiserman accepted the plaque and gave a few short remarks of thanks and appreciation to DVS and the BVS.

Mr. Icenhour then called up Mr. Thad Jones, former chairman and long-serving member of the BVS who is retiring after 11.5 years on the board, and gave him an engraved Jefferson cup in appreciation for his years of service. Mr. Combs reminded everyone of Mr. Jones's years of service. Mr. Jones gave a few short remarks of thanks and appreciation to DVS and the BVS.

Mr. Icenhour then called up Mr. Max Beyer, member of the BVS who is retiring after 5 years on the board, and gave him an engraved Jefferson cup in appreciation for his years of service. Mr. Combs reminded everyone of Mr. Beyer's years of service. Mr. Beyer gave a few short remarks of thanks

and appreciation to DVS and the BVS.

Quorum Determination

Mr. Icenhour then asked Ms. Carrie Ann Alford to call the roll. The roll was called and a quorum was determined with 12 members present. One member arrived shortly after the roll was called, for a total of 13 members present.

Chairman Icenhour asked Ms. Alford to introduce the guests. Their names are recorded above. He thanked them all for attending.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Alford pointed out one amendment to the agenda – Item IXb would be given by herself, in Mr. Kesler’s absence. Mr. Jim Icenhour noted the amendment and Mr. Max Beyer made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Thad Jones, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried **unanimously**. (*Attachment 1*)

Approval of November 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Del. Rich Anderson made a **motion, seconded** by Delegate Kathleen Murphy, to approve the November 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) Vice Chair Marie Juliano gave the report in Chairman Bart Barton’s absence. She reported on the JLC and their meeting since the BVS last met. A copy of the draft JLC policy initiatives matrix was included with the report. (*Attachment 2*) Ms. Alford reminded the BVS members that the enclosure with the JLC’s potential policy initiatives were still in the working phase and were not yet ready for distribution.

Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) 1st Vice Chair Al Pianalto gave a short report on the VSF, in the absence of Chairman Rich Schollmann. (*Attachment 3*) In addition to the VSR report, Mr. Pianalto mentioned a May 31 veterans forum hosted by Delegate Kirk Cox, and mentioned in particular one woman who brought up the issue of elder abuse and veterans and how she believes it to be widespread in Virginia. Mr. Pianalto requested the BVS consider this as a potential issue to study with one of their work groups and/or to work with the JLC on potential policy or legislative solutions.

Mr. Paige Cherry asked Mr. Pianalto about VSF funding. Mr. Pianalto explained that the VSF collects donations on behalf of DVS but doesn’t spend funds on foundation expenses and the new executive director they are looking to hire will be paid through general fund monies appropriated to the VSF when it becomes a stand-alone entity on July 1.

Mr. Thad Jones asked if they have someone working on grant writing or if they have considered it to pursue grant funds. Mr. Pianalto answered that at the current time they do not have anyone working on applying for grants but that is something that they are looking at.

Presentations

DVS Update

Commissioner John Newby gave a brief update on DVS, noting that he would not cover the Virginia War Memorial since Clay Mountcastle had already given an update in his greeting. He thanked the

members, especially the legislators for attending recent events and being involved. He mentioned the Virginia War Memorial groundbreaking and that DVS is working on plans for the groundbreaking ceremonies for the two new veterans care centers.

He mentioned the new Benefits offices opening this summer – Manassas on July 18, Loudoun in August and Williamsburg most likely in September. He also told the board that DVS has been approached by Fort Belvoir to have a benefits office right outside the gate at the old visitor's center. He stated that this will be an incredible opportunity and DVS is trying to work through the details, including needing additional FTEs for the office. Pentagon discussions continue to move forward and the hope is to be in there with a benefits office at the end of this year or beginning of next year.

VVFS is working on good things and working hard to get direct service positions converted to state employment prior to the end of June. They are busy interviewing and hiring now.

The Employment and Training programs are going very well. V3 is getting close to their goal of 25,000 veteran hires in Virginia and Raytheon is now officially a V3 company. Smithfield has created a goal of 4,000 vet hires by 2020. MMAC has over 12 hires and many more in process and is going well.

He said what's next is a focus on veteran entrepreneurship. Mr. Nick Kesler is doing good things in that area and more to come on that. The goal is to help TSMs and capturing them here in Virginia. DVS is working with DoD on the Skillbridge program to help active duty service members within 6 months of transition to be connected to a potential employer. He said the transition piece is the biggest for him whether he's here for another seven months or seven years.

He finished by saying he went to the Air Force Association (AFA) meeting at Langley AFB and there was lots of interest to know what is going on and available to veterans in Virginia. He brought a stack of 50 Virginia Veteran Resource Guides and all were taken.

Mr. Jones asked the Commissioner about the email the board had received about William & Mary's new program at the law school and if he could elaborate further on the relationship between William & Mary and DVS.

The Commissioner stated that the relationship between William & Mary and DVS is strong and the two are working on several projects together. The new Williamsburg office is in the old Puller Clinic building not far from the law school and DVS will continue to work closely with the law school and ways to use the building to reach veterans. He has also been contacted by the University of Richmond to do a similar program.

Ms. Alford pointed out that William & Mary has appointed Commissioner Newby to their Troops to Teachers advisory council to assist with that program.

New Business

BVS By-laws proposed amendments

Ms. Alford reminded the Board that due to the new code language the BVS by-laws needed to be amended. She went through the highlights, including expanded terms of service on the board, the work groups, the new Points of Contact system which replaces the old committee format, and the amended attendance section to comply with FOIA regulations regarding calling in from remote

locations due to emergencies and they not only need a valid reason, but we have to publish the address so the public can attend the remote location as well and that the regulation states there must still be a physical quorum and members cannot call in remotely more than 25% of annual meetings – since the BVS meets only 3 times a year, that means 1-2 call ins per term. (*Attachment 3*)

Veteran Entrepreneurship Work Group Report

Ms. Alford gave the report on the Veteran Entrepreneurship Work Group in the absence of Chairman Nick Kesler. (*Attachment 4*) She mentioned that Mr. Kesler has been working hard and put in many hours on this project. The forums, while a good idea, did not work due to timing. The first forum at George Mason University went well and the group was able to collect valuable data, however the others had to be canceled due to low registration numbers. Mr. Kesler is putting the survey in the field through a variety of sources, including local chambers of commerce, legislators and the VETE Women Veterans Summit email list. He hopes to gather more data and he is working with Secretary Harvey's executive level committee to study Veteran Entrepreneurship and they are considering one final forum in September in Richmond.

Mr. Kesler will present his final report to the board at the November meeting.

Women Veterans Work Group Report

Chairman Kathleen Murphy gave a short report on the Women Veterans Work Group and their work since the BVS last met. Delegate Murphy mentioned this will be the final report and it includes a recommendation to the board for a women veterans coordinator position at DVS. The final page of the report with the recommendation did not make it into the agenda packet, so Ms. Alford read the recommendation.

Mr. Icenhour called for a motion and discussion. Delegate Murphy made a **motion, seconded** by Delegate Rich Anderson, to approve recommendation to DVS as presented. There was no additional discussion. The motion carried **unanimously**.

A copy of the report is attached. (*Attachment 5*)

DVS Strategic Plan

Mr. Combs gave a presentation to the board members on the DVS Strategic Plan. He noted that all state agencies use a common strategic plan template with core elements, and that there are service area plans (in effect, mini strategic plans) for each of the Department's six service lines.

He explained that one of the things the BVS is tasked with in Code is to review the DVS strategic plan and make recommendations to the Commissioner. He explained the annual calendar agencies follow for legislation and how with the coming transition to a new Governor from November to January there will be many moving parts as agencies put together their budgetary requests and the current Governor will present his final budget to the Legislature and incoming Governor. There will also be a transition team working on a transition document for the new Governor and the agencies will be creating a new biennial strategic plan for the next two years.

He reminded the board members this is the time of year to meet with their service line director, as appointed, learn about the service line and what they are putting in their document for the strategic plan. The board members are there to be a sounding board and listen to the directors, review their strategic plan and needs, add any comments or edits and assist with ideas for big picture strategic planning for the next biennium.

DVS will send our budget and strategic plan for the next biennium to the Secretary in August and then it will go to the Governor in September. The cabinet secretaries all present their needs and requests and the Governor's team must sort through the requests based on the budget information they have, available resources, and decide what to spend the state's money on.

Mr. Combs told the board they have about 7 weeks to work with their service line directors on any budget recommendations for the FY19/20 budget. He recommended that the board members meet with DVS service line directors as soon as possible, but preferably by mid July.

The presentation was distributed to the board members after the meeting and is available upon request. (*Attachment 6*)

“Good of the Order” Reports

Mr. Johnny Johnson stated that he was up for reappointment and hoped he would be reappointed and continue to serve, but if he is not, it has been an honor to serve on the board.

Delegate Rich Anderson mentioned attending Boys State and Girls State hosted by the American Legion at Radford and Longwood Universities, respectively.

Ms. Sandra Love echoed Mr. Johnson's statement, that she too was up for reappointment and hoped she would be reappointed and continue to serve, but if she is not, it has been an honor to serve on the board.

Mr. Max Beyer thanked everyone and said farewell.

Mr. Thad Jones thanked everyone and said farewell.

Ms. Alford thanked Mr. Beyer and Mr. Jones for their service on the board and stated that they will be sorely missed. She also reminded everyone that the Good of the Order Reports are for board members to share what they are doing on behalf of the board and with veterans in their part of the Commonwealth in between meetings and they should be getting out and be visible at meetings and events in their communities and report back.

She also stated that she will be out of the office much of July and members should contact their service line directors directly and work directly with them on the strategic plan and budget. If they need contact information she will be happy to provide that but board members should not rely on her to facilitate the appointments in July.

Public Comment

There were no individuals seeking to make public comment.

Closing Remarks

Chairman Icenhour reminded the members that the next meeting will be held November 16 at the Petersburg Freedom Support Center. The meeting will start at 10 a.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

ATTACHMENT 1

**BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere St., Richmond, VA
June 22, 2017
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
AGENDA**

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:00 – 10:02)
- II. Roll Call and Quorum Determination – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman*, (10:02 – 10:05)
- III. Approval of Agenda, introduction of DVS staff and guests – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:05 – 10:10)
- IV. Special Presentation – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:10 – 10:15)
- V. Approval of March 16, 2017 Meeting Minutes – *Jim Icenhour, BVS Chairman* (10:15 – 10:17)
- VI. Welcome to the Virginia War Memorial and brief overview of expansion project – *Clay Mountcastle, Virginia War Memorial Director* (10:17-10:25)
- VII. Reports (10:25 – 10:35)
 - a. Joint Leadership Council – *Marie Juliano, JLC Vice Chairman*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Al Pianalto, VSF 2nd Vice Chair*
- VIII. DVS Update – *John Newby, Commissioner* (10:35 – 10:55)
- IX. New Business: (10:55-11:55)
 - a. Vote on BVS By-laws amendments, *Carrie Ann Alford, DVS Policy Director* (5 min.)
 - b. Report from Veteran Entrepreneurship Work Group, ~~*Nick Kester*~~ *Carrie Ann Alford* (5 min.)
 - c. Report from Women Veterans Work Group, *Del. Kathleen Murphy* (5 min.)
 - d. The Role of BVS in DVS Strategic Planning & Budgeting, *Steven Combs, Deputy Commissioner* (30 min)
 - e. “Good of the Order” Reports, *All Members* (15 min.)
- X. Public comment (11:55 – 12:00)
- XI. Wrap Up & Adjourn – *Jim Icenhour, Chairman* (12:00)

ATTACHMENT 2
JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT
to
THE BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES
June 22, 2017

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) has met once since the last meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) on March 16, 2017.

The JLC meeting on May 31, 2017, was held at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford. At this meeting, the Members considered six proposed initiatives for inclusion in the 2018 Legislative Agenda. Of the six proposed initiatives, two were new to the JLC and four were from last year's list of initiatives.

Of the two new initiatives offered, one is for the 2nd resolution of the constitutional amendment regarding tax exemptions for 100% Disabled Veterans and their surviving spouses. The second new initiative is a bill to be patroned by Delegate Jason Miyares for tax exemption on military retiree pay for certain low-income veterans.

All six proposed initiatives are sponsored by a JLC Member for further development and the drafting of a position paper for consideration and prioritization by the JLC at its meeting in September. A list of these proposed initiatives is enclosed with this report.

The JLC looks forward to continuing our partnership with the BVS in support of Virginia's veterans in 2017. Our next meeting is Wednesday held September 6th at the American Legion Headquarters in Richmond.

Respectfully submitted,

Harold H. Barton, Jr.
Chairman

Enclosure:

Summary of Proposed 2018 JLC Legislative Initiatives As of May 31, 2017

ATTACHMENT 3

VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT TO THE BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES June 22, 2017

The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees has held two meetings since the last Board of Veterans Services (BVS) meeting on March 16, 2017. The VSF Board of Trustees met on March 22, 2017 and May 11, 2017, both meetings were held at the American Legion Department Headquarters. Commissioner Newby provided a presentation detailing the Projected DVS FY18 Requirements and the potential needs of the individual agency programs (7 total) supported by the Foundation. Most programs showed increased spending requests for the upcoming fiscal year starting on July 1, 2017. Due to some substantial increases, the members agreed that further discussion was needed and it was recommended that the finance and development committee schedule a meeting to review the requests and then make their recommendations to the full Board for consideration.

During the 2017 Session of the General Assembly, a bill was passed and signed into law that will directly affect VSF as of July 1, 2017. The Foundation will then become a separate state agency with the Board of Trustees hiring the Executive Director. Other notable changes:

- The annual report will now be sent directly to the General Assembly

- The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security will be a member of the Board

- VSF will have authority to request appropriations

- DVS will provide staff support to VSF

Both organizations are confident that the new law will not affect the ability to work together for the common goals and are committed to making the transition go smoothly.

It was reported at the May 11th VSF Board of Trustees meeting that as of March 31, 2017, the Foundation had received donations totaling \$551,370.00, of which almost \$308,000 was designated for VVFS and \$185,000 for V3. Expenditures totaled \$459,618.05, an increase of a little over 50% from this time last year. The largest increase in spending was in VVFS for direct services and the pilot Homeless Veterans Fund.

Smithfield Foods donated \$68,000 to VVFS for the Pilot Homeless Veteran Fund. The check presentation with the Governor was held June 2, 2017 at the Virginia War Memorial.

The Board elected the following officers for FY18:

Chair: Rich Schollmann

1st Vice Chair: Al Pianalto

2nd Vice Chair: Jack Lanier

The next VSF Board meeting is scheduled for August 10, 2017 at the American Legion Department Headquarters.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Schollmann

Veterans Services Foundation Chairman

ATTACHMENT 4
Report of the Veteran Entrepreneurship Work Group

To: Chairman Jim Icenhour, Board of Veterans Services
From: Veteran Entrepreneurship Working Group, Board of Veterans Services
Date: June 23, 2017

Enclosures: (1) – Ecosystem Assessment Survey and Definitions of Terms
(2) – Survey Questions
(3) – Northern Virginia Ecosystem Model

Subj: PHASE III RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Veteran Entrepreneurship Working Group conducted an analysis related to Phase III of the “Veteran Entrepreneurship Initiative Support Study” from March 6, 2017 to June 16, 2017. Phase III sought to provide a “deep dive” on veteran entrepreneurship within Virginia, outlining current and proposed programs and policies, their relevant successes, and identified gaps. As part of this phase, the Working Group, in coordination with DVS, established a series of public forums to better identify any unique needs of veteran entrepreneurs within various regions across the state. The forums were scheduled as follows:

April 27th – George Mason University, May 30th – William & Mary, May 31st – Old Dominion University, June 5th – University of Virginia, June 6th – Virginia Tech

The forum at George Mason was attended by 43 people, including veteran entrepreneurs, service providers, and local leaders from the Veterans Business Outreach Center and Small Business Development Centers. Due to a low number of sign-ups at the other four forums, the decision was made to cancel. While we were unable to execute the forums at W&M, ODU, UVA, and VT, the Working Group did have constructive conversations with various members of the respective university staff, local incubators and accelerators, along with leaders from local SBDCs, Economic Development Authorities, and Chambers of Commerce. Feedback from the GMU forum and conversations with various veteran entrepreneurs from across the five regional ecosystems, coupled with ongoing research, will provide the necessary information for the Working Group to substantiate recommendations made in Phase IV.

In addition to the forums, the Working Group also conducted a survey to better understand the current state of the regional ecosystems. The definitions of terms and survey related to the entrepreneurial ecosystem assessment model are contained in Enclosure (1). A link to the survey is provided here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VAVetEntrepreneurshipSurvey> (Questions are Enclosure 2). While the survey has been taken by 67 respondents from across the state, the Working Group expects to gain at least 50 responses from each regional ecosystem (300 total responses; the Working Group believes there is a need to include a 6th region, to include Southern Virginia – South Hill and Emporia) to gain a comprehensive current state assessment and determine where programs, policies, or legislation could potentially enhance support to the regional ecosystems.

The Working Group sent the survey out to local regional leaders, such as the local SBDC, EDA, Chamber, and local incubators and accelerators, along with General Assembly Delegates and Senators, and will leave the survey open to submissions until July 16th. After July 16th the Working Group will synthesize all inputs and create regional ecosystem assessments for each region, as well as a comprehensive assessment for Virginia. An example of the regional ecosystem is located in

Enclosure (3).

Below are findings from Phase III research:

1. Nearly 25% of transitioning veterans state they desire to pursue “self-employment,” yet only ~5% pursue entrepreneurship¹;
2. Internal factors that create a competitive advantage for veteran entrepreneurs include, understanding risk and leadership²;
3. External factors that limit the ability of veterans to gain traction as entrepreneurs include, access to capital and availability of public & private entrepreneurial programs³;
4. Culture is king – social capital and interaction amongst entrepreneurs and their community promotes collaboration, mitigates risk, and creates thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems. Example: Charlottesville is #4 on Entrepreneur Magazine’s top-50 cities for entrepreneurship;
5. Major entrepreneurial programs in which veteran entrepreneurs participate in Virginia include SBA’s Boots2Business, IVMF’s Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans, Bunker Labs, Patriot Bootcamp, SCORE, and American Corporate Partners;
6. Various organizations provide education & training classes on entrepreneurship across the state including the SBA’s Veteran Business Outreach Centers (Springfield and Norfolk), Small Business Development Centers, and Universities/Community Colleges;
7. Virginia has several small business programs that support veteran-owned small businesses, including the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity;
8. There are leaders within the community willing to work with the state, such as 29 Diner (Fairfax) owner, John Wood, who is willing to donate time as a mentor and money to enhance programs, education, and training for veteran entrepreneurs. He believes there are more across the Commonwealth who would be willing to work with state and local leaders to create and/or expand programs supporting veteran entrepreneurs.

Last month Secretary Harvey was commissioned by Governor McAuliffe to stand up the Committee on Veteran Entrepreneurship to bring together leaders from across Virginia’s public, private, and nonprofit organizations to enhance efforts to collectively explore the various aspects of veteran entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth. Nick Kesler was asked to represent the Board of Veterans Services on that Committee. The first meeting of the Committee occurred on June 13th, where Nick briefed on the findings presented here. The Committee is exploring the potential of hosting one major forum in Richmond during the month of September to socialize and gain support for impending program, policy, and legislative recommendations to bolster support for veteran entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth.

Next Steps:

Phase IV will provide recommendations for consideration no later than September 29th to the Board of Veterans Services and Department of Veterans Services.

¹ Mark Rockefeller, *Street Shares*, VETCON 2017.

² Institute for Veterans and Military Families, “The State of Veteran Entrepreneurship Research: What We Know and Next Steps,” November 2016.

³ Ibid.

Enclosure 1

Definition of Terms

Mentorpreneurs: (Mentors + Entrepreneurs = Mentorpreneurs) The best mentors in an entrepreneurial ecosystem are successful entrepreneurs and lead by example.

Tipping Point Industry: Regions tend to have several specific industries and related medium to large corporations that together form a tipping point industry. Startups that align vertically and/or horizontally have access to resources and services that support those industries.

Culture: Culture includes the behavioral interactions of individuals and groups, prevalent norms and beliefs, and the social aspects of both the startup ecosystem and greater community surrounding the ecosystem. In the greater context, culture attracts people to visit and live in a region. It has features such bars and restaurants, festivals, diversity of people and outdoor activities. In a startup context, the culture covers many of the same components and includes attitudes towards failed startups, civic responsibility, competition, and risk.

Spark Events: Spark events unite constituents of the startup ecosystem. They encompass various events such as hack-a-thons, meet-ups, business plan competitions, pitch nights, workshops and other networking events. Spark events bring entrepreneurs and ecosystem participants together in person, developing relationships, fostering collaboration and creating a sense of community. These events are a large part of the culture and help spark excitement among startups, attract attention from media and are something that the community, and importantly the entrepreneurs, can rally around.

Government: Government holds the power to help or hinder growth in the startup ecosystem. Mature entrepreneurial ecosystems have mentorpreneurs with relationships with both local, state, and federal government officials. By fostering these relationships, mentorpreneurs and public officials can agree on a shared strategic vision for the startup ecosystem. Government policies help open doors for early startups and make it easier to begin a business. The government can also be an important source of funds for the ecosystem.

Universities: Universities are a critical foundational element of an entrepreneurial ecosystem, supplying future entrepreneurs and talent. Universities develop and educate the talent pool. Ecosystems with mutually beneficial university relationships have strong programs where students can be trained for a career as an entrepreneur and learn a realistic portrayal of the level of commitment and sacrifice of a startup endeavor. The element also represents the many resources to be leveraged at the universities, including research facilities, space to be used for ecosystem events, and faculty.

Space: Space represents more than one physical location; it refers to the density of an area where a group of entrepreneurs meet, work, collaborate, innovate and network. This area also serves as the ecosystem's front door, providing a central resource for aspiring entrepreneurs and those who might be new to the city. Space includes creative workspace for startup companies. The best startup space is a dense neighborhood with opportunity to expand as the startup ecosystem grows.

NGO's (Chamber of Commerce / Economic Development Authority / Trade Associations): The CoC/EDA/Trade Assoc.'s play the role of a bridge that can help unite multiple parties and elements in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Chamber of Commerce is a bridge for entrepreneurs to the other elements of the entrepreneurial ecosystem including access to training and services,

government, talent and investors.

Talent Pool: The ability for an ecosystem to support and build high growth startups is centered upon the human capital talent available in the region. For an ideal ecosystem, there should be a densely populated talent pool as the talent can leave one startup and move to other startups or create their own.

Access to Services: Services are critical pieces of the development of an ecosystem as they provide entrepreneurs with invaluable support and realistic expectations of what it takes to form a successful startup company. In time, service providers and training foster maturity of startup ideas and can prevent unnecessary failures. The ideal access to services and training means it is easy to find in an ecosystem and is affordable to an early stage startup. Training includes, but is not limited to, business principles and models, pitching investors or specific disciplines such as coding, programing and development. Services include, and again are not limited to, legal counsel, accounting, and human capital.

Investors: This element represents the existence of a traditional investment network such as venture capital funds, private equity groups, angel investors, and wealthy independent investors. The element also represents unique financing sources such as crowd funding and donation-based funding platforms. The investment element also includes investment matters like access to capital, reinvestment by successful startups, and investor risk tolerance.

Communication: Communication within a startup ecosystem is defined as the availability of information about the startup ecosystem's successes, failures, progress, changes and events. It includes media, both social and traditional, and the role media plays in getting information out to the entire startup ecosystem. Communication represents the linkage between every element so that there are no silos; rather each element is at least aware of what other elements are doing.

Enclosure 2 **Survey Questions**

1. What region best describes where you live / work?
 - Northern Virginia
 - Central Virginia (Richmond and Williamsburg)
 - Hampton Roads
 - Charlottesville and Staunton
 - Southwest Virginia (Roanoke and Bristol)
 - Southern Virginia (South Hill and Emporia)

2. What best defines your relationship to the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem?
 - Entrepreneur / Business Owner
 - Mentrapeneur
 - Supporter (staff of an incubator / accelerator / shared-space / makers-space)
 - Government
 - Nongovernmental Organization (Chamber of Commerce / Economic Development Agency / Trade Association / Veteran Service Organization)
 - Fee for Service (consultant – marketing / operations / financial / legal)
 - University (faculty / staff)
 - Business Support (manufacturer / distributor)

- Other (please specify)

All of the following questions were rated on a 1-7 score, with 1 = poor, 4 = adequate, and 7 = excellent.

Mentorpreneurs:

3. How would you rate access to mentorpreneurs in your region?
4. How would you rate the experience / quality of mentorpreneurs in your region?
5. How would you rate the ability of mentorpreneurs to be involved in the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem?

Universities:

6. How involved are faculty / staff from local colleges and universities in your regional entrepreneurial ecosystem?
7. How would you rate university involvement in entrepreneurial education and training in your region?
8. How would you rate access to grants / funding for student entrepreneurs?

Culture:

9. How would you rate the overall culture of your regional entrepreneurial ecosystem?
10. How would you rate the level of collaboration amongst entrepreneurs in your region?
11. How innovative / entrepreneurial would you rate the regional population?

Spark Events:

12. How would you rate the number of spark events in your region?
13. How would you rate the quality of spark events in your region?
14. How would you rate the ability of spark events to encourage cross-cultural / cross-industry / civil interaction in your region?

Space:

15. How would you rate access to commercial space for startups / small businesses in your region?
16. How would you rate access to local incubators / accelerators / shared-space / makers-space in your region?
17. How would you rate access to manufacturing, storage, and distribution facilities in your region?

Tipping Point Industry:

- 18. How would you rate access to a tipping point industry in your region?
- 19. How influential / level of involvement of the tipping point industry in the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem?
- 20. How would you rate the level of growth potential of the tipping point industry(s)?

Talent Pool:

- 21. How would you rate the pool of entrepreneurial talent in your region?
- 22. How would you rate access of the talent pool to entrepreneurial education and training in your region?
- 23. How would you rate incentives in your region to attract entrepreneurs?

Investors:

- 24. How would you rate access to investors in your region?
 - Debt
 - Equity
 - Venture Capital
 - Angels
- 25. How would you rate access to local vs outside capital in your region?
 - Local Capital
 - Outside Capital
- 26. How risk prone are investors in your region?

Access to Services:

- 27. How would you rate to startup / small business consulting in your region?
 - Marketing
 - Operations / Supply Chain
 - Financial / Accounting
 - Legal
- 28. How would you rate access to startup / small business services in your region?
 - Production
 - Distribution
 - IT
 - Human Capital
- 29. How would you rate access to pro bono services in your region?

Communication:

30. How would you rate the ability of the elements within the entrepreneurial ecosystem to communicate with veterans?

31. How would you rate the effectiveness of communication amongst different elements of the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem?

32. How would you rate the effectiveness of communication between entrepreneurs / small businesses in your region?

Government:

33. How would you rate the level of involvement of government in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in your region?

- Federal
- State
- Local

34. How would you rate access to government grants, tax incentives, and other financial support for startups / small businesses in your region?

- Federal
- State
- Local

35. How would you rate governmental policies related to entrepreneurship / small businesses in your region?

- Federal
- State
- Local

Non-governmental:

36. How would you rate the level of involvement of non-governmental organizations in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in your region?

- Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Authority
- Trade Organizations
- Veterans Service Organizations

37. How would you rate the level of support non-governmental organizations provide entrepreneurs / small businesses in your region?

- Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Authority
- Trade Organizations
- Veterans Service Organizations

The following question was rated from 1-7, where 1 = not-important, 4 = important, and 7 = extremely important.

38. How important do you believe each element is to veteran entrepreneurial success?

- Mentorpreneurs
- Universities
- Culture
- Spark Events
- Space
- Tipping Point Industry
- Talent Pool
- Investors
- Access to Services
- Communication
- Government
- NGO's

39. Please rank the elements from 1-12 (1 = least important, 12 = most important) according to what you believe are the most important elements for a veteran entrepreneurial ecosystem.

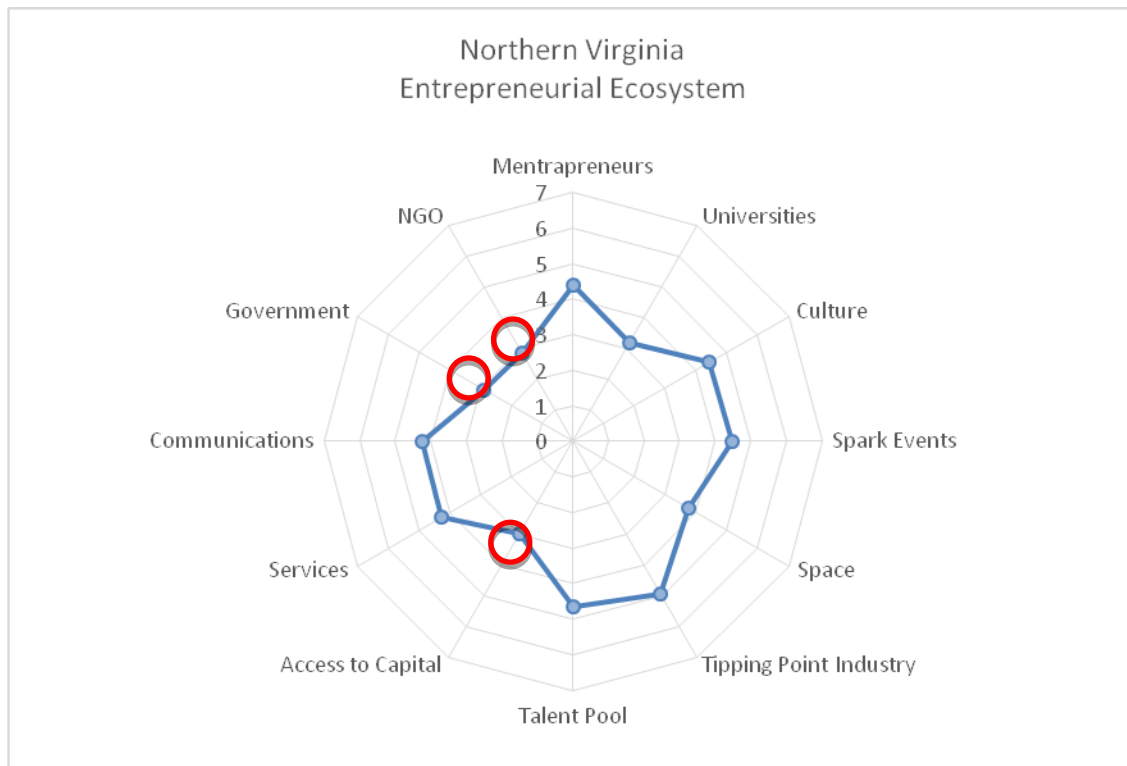
- Mentorpreneurs
- Universities
- Culture
- Spark Events
- Space
- Tipping Point Industry
- Talent Pool
- Investors
- Access to Services
- Communication
- Government
- NGO's

The following questions are open-ended.

40. What do you believe are the defining characteristics of veteran entrepreneurs?

41. Do you believe veteran entrepreneurs have any special needs or mechanism of support as compared with their civilian counterparts? Why or why not?

Enclosure 3
Northern Virginia Ecosystem Model:



Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey

- Survey Monkey
 - 42 questions
 - 21 responses
- Key takeaways:
 - Successes: **Mentors, Culture, and Tipping Point Industry**
 - Gaps: **Government, NGOs, Access to Capital**

ATTACHMENT 5
Report of the Women Veterans Work Group

June 21, 2017

Board of Veterans Services
Women Veterans Working Group

Delegate Kathleen Murphy, Chair
Ms. Susan Hippen
Ms. Sandra Love
Ms. Laurie Neff
Ms. Belinda Pinckney
Chairman Jim Icenhour

Final Report to the BVS on Supporting Women Veterans

Overview:

Women serve in all branches of the military, but the Army has the most women service members. They currently make up fifteen percent of the total active-duty, guard and reserve forces. Throughout U.S. military history, various rules and regulations have limited official involvement, rank attainment, and roles for women within the services, however this has dramatically changed and women are now serving in many of the same combat roles as their male counterparts. Since 9/11, more than **240,000** women have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, and more than 140 have died in one of those two theaters.

There are **111,034 women veterans in Virginia, which is 14% of our veteran population.** While 9.6% of all veterans nationwide are women, Virginia leads the nation with the highest percentage of women veterans. According to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) estimates, the number of women veterans will grow from 1.8 million (8.2% of all veterans) in 2010 to 2.1 million (15.2%) in 2036. At the same time, the number of male veterans is expected to decline.

While the challenges and opportunities for women in the military are similar to those of their male counterparts, there are many circumstances that are unique to, or dispro-portionately affect women veterans. Women soldiers face unique challenges in military service due to merely being women in a historically male environment (Jebo, 2005).

Women veterans are up to four times more likely to:

- 1) Be young, median age for women veterans is 47; versus 61 for men;
- 2) Identify themselves as a racial minority;
- 3) Have lower incomes than male veterans; and
- 4) Be unemployed (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2006).

Prior to the recent recession, women veterans ages 18-24 had an unemployment rate of 16% – double that of their non-veteran counterparts and higher than male veterans in the same age group (Foster & Vince, 2009).

Some of the highest risk issues for women veterans:

Divorce

The marriages of women soldiers are at an increased risk for dissolution when compared to the marriages of male soldiers. This is of critical importance to the military, because being married has been shown to serve as a protective factor against homelessness and suicide for women. Research suggests that soldier retention rates, performance, overall satisfaction with military life, and healthy coping methods are all affected by a soldier's marital and family life satisfaction. The highest risk of divorce is among women soldiers married to male civilians.

In order to help reduce the high proportion of marital dissolution among women military personnel, programs and interventions should be developed and tailored to best serve these women and their marriages.

Homelessness

Women veterans are the fastest growing population of homeless veterans. They are three to four times more likely to become homeless. Over the last decade, the number of homeless women veterans has nearly doubled (U.S. Department of Labor). Like their male counterparts, they often struggle with readjustment to civilian life and it is not uncommon to find them in need of services. They are found alone, hungry, scared, without shelter, scattered across our Virginia counties. The risk for homelessness for recent veterans, especially women, is increasing.

Sexual Assault

Women remain at a greater risk of sexual assault in the military. Although conditions are improving, as the *Washington Post* discovered last year. They reported that about 14,900 sexual assaults of some kind occurred in 2016, compared to about 34,000 in 2006. The Pentagon arrived at its findings both by compiling sexual assault reports and carrying out a survey in which more than 150,000 service members responded. Pentagon survey found that attacks are now more likely to be reported than in prior years. The frequency with which a sexual assault victim reports an attack has increased from about 1 in 14 in 2006 to about 1 in 3 last year. Services need to be in place to help these veterans when they come forward.

Transitioning to Civilian Life/Employment

It is clear that a women veteran's ability to find meaningful employment is essential to her ability to move forward in a positive and productive life outside the military. The primary reason women veterans give for not being in the labor force is the need to take care of their home or family (37%). The second most common reason for women veterans is being ill or having a disability (27%).

Challenges for women veterans transitioning into civilian life include:

- Lack of available employment workshops on or close to our military bases or virtually on line, focused on transition planning, skills assessments, exploration of educational and career opportunities;
- The need for additional job training;
- Assistance translating women veteran's skills into the civilian market; or help them understand the civilian job search process including locating free employment services, provide guidance on the mechanics of getting a job including developing interviewing skills, and effective resume writing;

- Help locating living accommodations and when children are included, locating schools, child care and other needs of families with children;
- Programs providing the critical help to deal with PTS, MST and other combat related injuries.

Federal Government:

The federal government offers assistance and provide programs and services for women veterans through the VA and Department of Labor, but these programs can be difficult for the average veteran to access.

The Veterans Administration has awarded grants to eight community-based homeless veteran service providers to support programs designed specifically for women veterans, including those with dependent children. The Department of Labor also offers grants to programs that will provide job training, counseling and placement services and HUD helps with housing.

And now, there are also a growing number of non-profits throughout the United States, addressing everything from reintegration issues to career transitions.

States:

States with the largest number of women veterans are Virginia, California, Florida, Georgia and Texas. However, the majority of states have been slow to recognize the importance of taking care of women veterans.

What some states are doing to help fund veteran programs and raise awareness:

At least eight states offer a special license plate recognizing women veterans. Revenue generated from plate sales helps to fund veterans programs. (Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio and Texas)

Seven states have designated either a Women Veterans Day or Women Veterans Month. (Alaska, California, Georgia, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Puerto Rico)

- Alaska celebrates Women Veterans Day on Nov. 9 of each year to “commemorate the sacrifices endured and valor displayed by American women veterans and to recognize their increasing role in the military.”

At least 12 states have established a women veteran program or division or named a women veterans coordinator to oversee state benefits and services. (California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon and Texas)

- In Indiana the General Assembly enacted legislation in 2014 (SB354) creating the Hoosier Women Veterans Program within the Department of Veterans Affairs. The program has multiple purposes including performing outreach to improve awareness of state and federal benefits; assessing the needs of women veterans; reviewing programs and other initiatives designed to meet these needs; and making recommendations to the director of veterans affairs. Visitors to the program’s website are encouraged to join a registry used to connect women veterans to various resources and benefits to which they are entitled. Indiana also has a full-time women veterans coordinator and has held a conference for women veterans every year since 2007.

- In Texas, the Texas Veterans Commission acts as the state appointed advocate of Texas veterans as they attempt to secure the benefits rightfully earned in exchange for their service in our nation's armed forces and includes a section to assist women veterans.

Recommendation

Despite the fact Virginia is the top state of population of women veterans, we do not have a Women's Veterans Coordinator. Virginia needs to offer a direct line of support and a safe and trusted state for women veterans to live and thrive.

We propose a Woman Veterans Coordinator position be created within the Virginia Dept. of Veterans Services, and this person be committed specifically to serving and supporting women veterans and their unique needs, including support for transition, readjustment, continuing education or vocational training, as well as support services to assist them in overcoming emotional trauma. Her duties will include planning and running the DVS Annual Virginia Women Veterans Summit, empower and inform women veterans regarding benefits, opportunities, networking, and programs to which they may be entitled and provide a voice of advocacy and educate communities in Virginia about the issues and challenges that women veterans face. Additionally, she will build and maintain a comprehensive list of all the resources available to women veterans and build relationships with these groups, identifying funding opportunities such as federal grants, and implementation of a mentoring program. This will ensure we are doing all we can to support our brave women veterans.

ATTACHMENT 6
**Background Paper on the State Agency Strategic Planning and
Virginia Performs**

- In Virginia, state government agencies use a common strategic planning template that identifies:
 - Mission
 - Vision
 - Values
 - Funding sources
 - Customers
 - Partners
 - Agency Goals, Objectives, and Measures
 - Products and Services
 - Staffing
 - Key Risk Factors; and
 - Management discussion.
- In addition, each service line has a Service Area Plan (SAP) that covers:
 - Description of the program/service;
 - Mission alignment (to the agency);
 - Products and services;
 - Anticipated changes;
 - Factors impacting the service area; and
 - Financial overview.
- Agency strategic plans are hosted on the Virginia Performs platform (<http://vaperforms.virginia.gov/>), a publicly-accessible website.
 - The system must be “unlocked” before agencies can make edits or updates. This is usually done on an annual basis;
 - Agency changes/updates are reviewed/approved by the Department of Planning & Budget (DPB) before they go “live” on Virginia Performs;
 - DPB issues instructions to agencies on the “scope” of edits/updates that are to be made in a given year.
- The system is currently “unlocked” for agency edits/updates
 - Per DPB instruction, edits/updates are be limited to “bringing the plans up to date” rather than laying out new products, services, or funding requirements;
 - Agency updates are due to DPB by April 14;
 - DVS directors have completed draft updated to the DVS plan. It is ready for BVS review/input.
- The Board of Veterans Services has the power and duty to “*Review and advise the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services on the Department's strategic plan.*”
- The BVS Chairman has assigned a BVS member (or members) to be the lead Point of Contact (POC) for each of the department’s service areas, as well as a POC for the overall strategic planning process.
- DVS will send each POC (or POCs) the Service Area Plan (SAP) for their area. We request that the BVS POCs review the SAPs for their area and return with recommended changes NLT April 3 so that DVS may incorporate all updates before the April 14 DPB deadline.
- DVS POCs are Carrie Ann Alford and Steven Combs, plus the service line directors.